

BEAUTY,

Eng. Poetry vol. 11h.

POETICAL ESSAY.

IN THREE PARTS.



L O N D O N,

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT in the Strand.

MDCCCLXVI.

[Price One Shilling.]

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A POETICAL ESSAY.

PART I.

THE various powers by NATURE's hand combin'd
To fill with harmony the raptur'd mind;
Whose forms, as diff'rent lustre they impart,
Or strike the senses, or exalt the heart,
My daring MUSE unfolds; — resolv'd to trace
The glorious theme thro' ev'ry path of space;
Till borne aloft on Truth's triumphant wings
Boldly she rise, and soaring as she sings,
By Fancy urg'd, she shape her vent'rous flight
To those blest regions of supreme delight,
Where BEAUTY pours her noblest, brightest ray,
Amidst the mansions of eternal day.

B

DAUGHTERS

DAUGHTERS of ALBION ; ye whose eyes dispense
The mildest beams of virgin innocence,
Whose charms by all the Graces are design'd,
Each the fair emblem of a fairer mind,
To you I dedicate this votive lay : —
With kind applause the pleasing labour pay :
Crown with your myrtle wreaths my artless lyre,
Nor scorn the numbers which yourselves inspire :
So shall my MUSE the Poet's bay disclaim,
And prize your smiles, beyond the breath of Fame.

Come, sacred NATURE ! Nymph divinely bright !
Unfold thy prospects to my eager sight,
O'er flow'ry lawns, with thee, O, let me rove,
And tread the devious lab'rinth of the grove.
Come in the garb of simple grandeur dress'd,
And by thy precepts form my docile breast ;
Clear ev'ry mist, and give my eyes to see,
That BEAUTY only is deriv'd from thee.
Teach me that ev'ry art in ev'ry age
Is but a transcript from thy perfect page,

Where

Where imitation ever charms us most,
And the best model, is the noblest boast.
When the discerning sons of Greece and Rome
Bent the proud arch, and swell'd the stately dome,
E'er gothic structures idly pleas'd the heart,
With all the nice perplexities of art,
The glorious architects rever'd thy name,
And following NATURE, found the road to fame!
While Gallic artists proud to shine alone
Amidst a new creation of their own,
Boast too refin'd a taste to suffer thee
To guide a riv'let, or to rear a tree;
But art, expence, and labour have combin'd,
To draw th' attention of the trifling mind,
That senseless crowds may view with idiot stare,
The watry column, and the spruce parterre.
Yet tho' LE NOTRE bade on ev'ry side
The dazzling garden spread its flow'ry pride,
While the unvaried lawn, and vista'd shade,
In lines, and squares were regularly laid;

4 B E A U T Y, A

Tho' proud VERSAILLES, thro' marble fountains, play
Her tortur'd waters to the face of day,
Such scenes, which only charm us by surprize,
O! may I never view, but to despise:
My wand'ring footsteps rather deign to lead
Thro' the dark forest, or th' chamel'd mead;
Where winding streams divide the verdant vale,
And artless music floats in ev'ry gale.

Ye NYMPHS of PINDUS! who have still possess'd
From earliest infancy my raptur'd breast,
And thou, celestial FANCY, matchless maid!
Descend propitious to your vot'ry's aid,
Bear me to happier regions far away,
From whence HYPERION darts his ev'ning ray,
Where BEAUTY's native form was ne'er defac'd
By servile ignorance, and barb'rous taste,
But thro' luxuriant fields, and fragrant groves,
In innocence the peaceful savage roves:

Where

Where lofty mountains lift their piny heads,
 Where its green lap the vast savannah spreads,
 Or where the congregated waters sweep
 With foaming lapse, down NIAGARA'S steep,
 Can all the pride of tasteless artists vie
 With objects vast as these! — in Reason's eye?
 Where BEAUTY dwells amidst the spacious plains,
 Dress'd in her richest pomp, for NATURE reigns.

But say, to scenes of humbler grace unknown,
 Dwells BEAUTY with magnificence alone?
 And from BRITANNIA'S pleasing prospects hurl'd,
 Deigns she alone to bless the western world?
 Not so; — her lovely form is here display'd
 In ev'ry leaf that forms the summer shade,
 And ev'ry blooming flower, that paints the vernal
 glade.

Who stretch'd upon the green hill's breezy brow
 Can see the various landscape spread below,

The

The village spire—the wreathing smoke ascend,
 The forest wave, the thymy downs extend,
 The shining river roll its silver stream
 Thro' woods, impervious to the solar beam,
 Or 'midst the meads in smooth meanders glide,
 While bending ozers stoop to kiss the tide,
 Till in th' horizon faintly ting'd with blue,
 The distant mountains close the pleasing view,
 And not in ev'ry tint of NATURE's hand,
 See BEAUTY's form, and own her mild command?

When from the East the glorious orb of day
 Pours on the burnish'd cliff a golden ray,
 While pearly dew-drops, sprinkled by the morn,
 Shine in the turf, or glitter on the thorn;
 When splendid in meridian light array'd,
 His piercing beams the woodland gloom pervade,
 When wrap'd in misty ev'ning's silent reign,
 Th' encreasing darkness steals across the plain,

Or

Or when in virgin state, the Delian Queen
Drives her bright chariot thro' the blue serene,
While scatter'd round in fair confusion lie
The inferior glories of the vaulted sky:
When gently o'er the flower-empurpled vale,
The vernal zephyrs breathe a genial gale,
When as fierce summers sultry rays descend,
With blushing fruit the loaded branches bend,
When autumn crowns the hills with waving corn,
And pours profusion from his twisted horn,
While deep'ning shade on shade, the woods are seen
From the full crimson, to the faded green:
Or when the trees their leafy honours yield,
And cheerless ruffet clads the dreary field;
When the cascade by wintry fetters tied,
Must cease to murmur, and the stream to glide;
While blows the storm, or falls the delug'd rain,
Or fleecy snows o'erspread the whiten'd plain,
And NATURE, tho' her meanest garb she wears,
Majestic ev'n in misery appears.

In ev'ry season, ev'ry hour, I trace
Imperial BEAUTY! thy transcendent grace;
Behold each scene thy lovely form display,
And wond'ring, own thy universal sway.

Blest is the youth! on whose high-favour'd head
The sacred Nine their happy influence shed;
Inspir'd by them, his raptur'd eyes explore
The choicest objects of thy charming store.
For him their strains the sylvan warblers breathe,
For him fair MAIA twines her flow'ry wreath,
Fragrant for him the morning breezes blow,
The poplar trembles, and the fountains flow,
Each charm of Nature strongly strikes his breast,
And BEAUTY shines supreme, by young ey'd FANCY
dress'd.

BEAUTY,

BEAUTY,

A POETICAL ESSAY.

PART II.

OF all that NATURE's rural prospects yield,
The chrystal fountain and the flow'ry field,
Enough, my MUSE! — the force of BEAUTY trace
Now in each feature of the female face,
For there she boasts superior powers, that move
The melting soul to extasy and love.
O! whisper to my heart, AONIA's choir,
Harmonious numbers, and seraphic fire!
Resistless Queen of PAPHOS, aid my strain,
With all the Loves and Graces in thy train.
Ye sportive Nymphs, and laughing Pleasures join,
Adorn each thought, and polish ev'ry line.
With such assistance shall my song rehearse
The fairest subject in the sweetest verse.

C.

BRITANNIA!

BRITANNIA! happy land! thy sea-girt coast
 The tend'rest ornament of love can boast:
 From other regions exil'd, here alone
 Fair DELICACY rears her sacred throne:
 HONOR and MODESTY her lineage claim,
 Her nurse was DECENCY, her tutor FAME,
 Desire attends where'er her footsteps move,
 Unalter'd bliss, and never-fading love.
 O! keep her rules for ever in your view,
 Ye NYMPHS of ALBION, for I sing to you:
 Tho' your bright charms can kindle fiercer flames,
 Than those of fam'd CROCODIA's lovely dames,
 With steadfast course pursue her perfect plan,
 Whose dictates please us more than BRAURY can.
 Let GALLIA's sunburn'd maids their cheeks incrust
 With the false varnish of a crimson dust;
 On artificial locks, which towering rise
 A monstrous pile, and seem to threat the skies,
 Let them, with taste capricious, powder spread,
 To ape the honours of a hoary head;

So

So CALEDONIA's fir-crown'd hills appear,
 When big with snow descends th' inclement year:
 Let them, each soft endearment laid apart,
 With open impudence attack the heart:
 Form'd as you are each Beauty to display,
 And mock the painter's tint, and poet's lay,
 Ne'er may this modest ornament be lost,
 Your first perfection, and your fairest boast,
 Which can your eyes with force resistless arm,
 Point ev'ry glance, and double ev'ry charm.
 Ne'er may your skill such foreign arts employ,
 To raise that passion which they must destroy:
 Still let your skins, with native lustre, shew
 The white rose, blended with its blushing foe;
 Still let your hair, with unaffected grace,
 In glossy ringlets decorate your face:
 With powers like these can pomp and splendor vie,
 The sparkling di'mond, or the Tyrian dye:
 When youth and beauty deck the blooming maid,
 The purple sickens, and the di'monds fade.

Adorn'd with charms that ev'ry art despise,
Victorious Love exults, and triumphs in her eyes.

Not all the blossoms NATURE's fingers fling
O'er the gay plains, when Zephyr breathes the spring,
Please like the Nymph, whose winning smiles inspire
Love's gentle flame, and kindle warm desire;
Pale is each flower, and faded ev'ry green,
If female BEAUTY heighten not the scene.
When newly form'd, and plac'd in EDEN's shade,
Our waking Sire the blossoming fields survey'd,
Awhile he view'd the land with fond delight,
Awhile the fair creation charm'd his sight;
But soon the pleasing novelty was o'er,
And soon the fair creation charm'd no more:
Heaven saw the dull stagnation of his breast,
And, pitying, sent him EVE, to make him blest;
With her, distress he rather wish'd to share,
To live by toil, and taste the bread of care,

Than

Than with his careless limbs on roses thrown,
To prove the joys of Paradise alone :
With her thro' dreary wastes he chose to go,
Friend to her grief, and partner of her woe :
Chear'd by the flame of love, the desert smil'd,
And more than EDEN bloom'd upon the wild.

May the curs'd wretch ! from female charms who roves.
To monstrous pleasures, and unseemly loves ;
Who from kind NATURE'S lucid fountain flies
To the polluted pools of guilty joys,
Far from the social haunts of man be driv'n,
And left to conscience, and avenging Heaven.
But hail ! ye favour'd train ! supremely blest
With the rich treasure of a feeling breast,
Who fir'd by transports, exquisitely fine,
Submissive kneel at BEAUTY'S brightest shrine,
Whether the sprightly virgin claim your care,,
Or arm'd with majesty, the haughtier fair,

Or

Or the sweet nymph, whose melting eyes proclaim
Her bosom, form'd for Love's imperial flame,
Where as we gaze, the torch of young Desire
Lights in our breasts a sympathetic fire:
Hail, happy train! form'd only to receive
The fairest joys the hand of Heaven can give,
Joys, which alone th' exalted soul can prove,
The burning extasies of mutual love.
Far from your paths be hate, and fell disdain,
Pale jealousy, and sorrow's weeping train:
To crown your hours, may love with friendship join,
And smiling peace her roseate garlands twine,
And every golden moment take its flight,
Wing'd with soft ease, and pregnant with delight,
Till time proclaims their destin'd period run,
And death concludes the bliss which love begun.

Ye stoic tribe, who o'er the mind preside
With useless sway, and impotence of pride:

Who

Who form your empty rules, with childish art,
 To force each gen'rous passion from the heart,
 With eager zeal your air-built schemes pursue,
 And talk of feelings which ye never knew:
 So may the wretch of lights and colours dream,
 Whose eye-balls never drank the solar beam;
 LOVE shall superior to your efforts rise,
 Elude your labours, and your toils despise:
 LOVE, whose fierce rays in every climate shine,
 The Arctic Circle, or the scorching Line:
 Inspir'd by LOVE, beneath the spicy shade,
 The am'rous Indian woos the fable maid:
 LOVE's sacred power the frozen Zemblians know
 'Midst icy rocks, and mountains form'd of snow,
 For there his glowing beam with genial light
 Has pierc'd the gloom, and chear'd the polar night.
 Where eastern luxury (those joys unknown
 Which spring from mutual liberty alone,
 Commits, relentless, to the Eunuch's care,
 With barb'rous dignity, th' imprison'd fair,

O'er

O'er the deserted shores and barren plains,
Pale Tyranny in all her horrors reigns ;
No dauntless Patriots there the Despot awe,
His will is reason, and his sentence law :
While the mean slaves, a cruel, coward train,
Bow to the rod, and kiss the galling chain :
But where, with gentle sway, Love's friendly hand
Has stretch'd its influence o'er a happy land,
There in the shade of each inspiring grove,
By science led, the warbling Muses rove ;
There all the gen'rous passions fix their seat,
And ev'ry bosom burns with patriot heat,
There manly courage dwells, ingenuous shame,
And VIRTUE'S conscious worth, and FREEDOM'S
glorious flame.

B E A U T Y,

B E A U T Y,

A P O E T I C A L E S S A Y.

P A R T III.

YE pleasing visions, and fantastic dreams,
Of hallow'd mountains, of poetic streams,
And shades for ever sacred to the song
Of Græcian Phœbus, and the Thespian throng,
O! melt into the winds, nor longer spread
Your sweet delusions round my raptur'd head:
But thou, celestial TRUTH, my prayer attend,
And be my MUSE, my GUARDIAN, and my FRIEND:
While I from Fancy's fairy realms depart,
To search the nobler regions of the heart,
Deign, heavenly Guide, my numbers to inspire,
And wake to bolder strains the breathing lyre.
The flow'ry landscape, and the blooming fair,
Bright as they are, no more demand my care,

D

Direct

Direct my eyes from NATURE's pleasing roll,
 To read the MORAL BEAUTY of the soul,
 To trace her form by matter unconfin'd,
 Thro' each divine perfection of the mind,
 And there behold her sovereign hand dispense,
 The powers of bliss to each attending sense.

Say, if we roam where all the Graces lead,
 Thro' the cool thicket, or th' enamel'd mead?
 Tho' NATURE in her vernal pride appear,
 Or laughing Summer deck the purple year,
 What scenes of pleasure can the bosom share
 Deform'd by passion, or disturb'd by care?
 Or what delightful hopes does love impart,
 When jaundic'd jealousy infects the heart?

'Tis in the mind that BEAUTY stands confess'd,
 In all the noblest pride of glory dress'd,
 Where virtue's rules the conscious bosom arm,
 There to our eyes she spreads her brightest charm:
 There all her rays, with force collected, shine,
 Proclaim her worth, and speak her race divine.

Ye

Ye sages, who creation's depth explore,
 And hang incessant o'er the pleasing lore,
 Who view the earth, in stated periods, run
 Her course mysterious round the central sun,
 Who view five diff'rent orbs direct their flight
 Round the same chearing fount of heat and light;
 Who rushing forward, urg'd by force divine,
 See distant suns on distant systems shine,
 Till all the wisdom reas'ning man can boast,
 Amidst the boundless fields of space is lost.
 Vast as it is! does this stupendous whole
 With half that wonder strike th' astonish'd soul?
 With half that veneration fill the mind?
 As those brave chiefs, the patrons of mankind,
 Who mov'd by pity for the public weal,
 Despis'd the tyrant's axe, the bigot's wheel,
 Repell'd the cruel force of factious hate,
 Or bravely fell, to save a sinking state?

Ye warrior kings! Ambition's fav'rite train,
 Who hunt false glory thro' th' embattled plain;

Tho' varnish'd speciously your martial rage
 Beams forth too brightly from th' historian's page,
 Tho' lays divine record each impious name,
 And worlds misjudging, call th' oppression, fame;
 The honest man, from power at distance plac'd,
 By freedom guarded, and by virtue grac'd,
 More true rewards from reason's hand shall find,
 Than ye, the storms and earthquakes of mankind.
 Tho' half the globe, by error drawn aside,
 Scorn modest merit, while they kneel to pride;
 Fair reason dares assert the fair pretence
 To endless fame, of peaceful innocence,
 Will snatch the wreath from proud ambition's sword,
 And honor SHENSTONE more than PRUSSIA'S LORD.
 So when some torrent, swell'd by hasty rains,
 Rolls from the hills, and hides the neighb'ring plains,
 The meads around one liquid mirror lie,
 A glorious object to the stranger's eye,
 But worthier praises to the stream belong;
 Which winds its waves the humbler vales among,

Improves the fields that grace its sedgy fides,
And pours fair plenty where its current glides.

O! would the royal race but learn to know
From what blest source their future praise must flow,
Enroll'd with TIRUS in the lists of fame
Succeeding times should sanctify each name:

The smiles of freedom o'er a realm to spread,
To bid fair science lift her lovely head,
To strike dread terror thro' the guilty breast,
To raise the humble, and relieve th' oppress'd,
With lenient hand to stop the heart-felt sigh,
And wipe the tear from pale affliction's eye,
These! these are charms! to which compar'd the globe,
The crown, the scepter, and the purple robe,
The arm'd array, the courtier's idle state,
And all the low ambition of the great,
Meet with our childhood's toys an equal lot,

A moment's transport, and the next forgot.
Virtue alone, on active wings, shall rise
From earth's mean pomp, and seek her native skies:

She

She of superior lustre nobly proud;
 Contemns the suffrage of the fickle croud,
 Mocks envy's darts, and scandal's pois'nous breath,
 Great, tho' defam'd, and conqueror, ev'n in death.

For freedom arm'd, on CHALGRAVE's fatal plain,
 Lo! glorious HAMPDEN number'd with the slain:
 O! while with mournful sighs you view his tomb,
 Own him more blest in that untimely doom,
 Than impious CROMWELL; tho' his stronger fate
 Grac'd him with all the gorgeous pomp of state,
 Who, base deserter of his country's cause,
 Despis'd her senates, and revers'd her laws;
 Chang'd regal power for arbitrary sway,
 Fought to enslave, protected to betray,
 And clos'd the horrid scene of social strife
 With the sad off'ring of his sov'reign's life.

Thrice happy train! whom freedom leads afar,
 To hurl on foreign foes the bolts of war:

Rancour

She

Rancour to you shall ne'er impute the guilt
 Of royal blood, in civil discord spilt,
 But the victorious band shall justly claim
 The wreath of glory, and immortal fame;
 While on the youthful warrior's fatal bier
 His forrowing country pours the pensive tear:
 Secure those chiefs of honor's lasting meed,
 Who fight like GRANBY, or like WOLFE who bleed.

Are there so mean, who boast of worth that springs
 From venal statesmen, and deluded kings?
 Who without blushing own, their hands have sold
 Their fame; their truth, their liberty for gold?
 Who break each tie of public, private life,
 For founding titles, or a portion'd wife,
 Proud on their breasts a glittering mark to bear,
 Which honor hates, and virtue scorns to wear;
 Tho' the misdeeming vulgar's dazzled sight
 Awhile may bless these meteors spurious light,
 Short is their joy! — let fortune hide her head,
 Such pride is tarnish'd, and such glory fled:

While

While that unfading worth, which builds alone
 On VIRTUE's solid base, a lasting throne,
 And, by no random censures kept in awe,
 Is clear'd by CONSCIENCE, and by VIRTUE's law;
 On fortune's smiles can look with coolness down;
 Can bear, without a pang, her keenest frown:
 The threats of want, of death, unmov'd can hear,
 And fearing God, disclaim all other fear,
 Shine forth alike, oppress'd, or grac'd by power,
 In courts, in camps, in exile, or the tower.

Thus far, O BEAUTY! has my daring tongue,
 In humble lays, thy various merits sung:
 Still as the theme, impetuous I pursue,
 The fleeting goal flies farther from my view;
 Ev'n in the breast by virtue's dictates arm'd,
 Thy light is sickly, and thy shape deform'd;
 The stormy passions all their rage employ
 To cloud that lustre which they can't destroy.
 Then WISDOM, come! unfold thy mystic page,
 Rich with the spoils of ev'ry clime, and age,

Thy

Thy awful volume let my eyes explore,
 Till vanquish'd Nature yield up all her store.
 And thou, MORALITY, whose sacred art
 By virtuous precepts forms the human heart,
 Teach me what experience yet has found,
 In all its curious search, and ample round:
 And shew my way'ring mind a certain course
 To trace bright BEAUTY to her perfect source.
 In vain you try to solve the thorny maze,
 And guide my feet thro' error's devious ways,
 Lost and bewilder'd midst her paths I rove,
 Uncertain how to turn, or where to move.
 But from the regions of celestial day,
 Behold! in form ethereal wings her way!
 Meek-eye'd RELIGION, hail! — for well I know
 Thy mild demeanor, and thy placid brow.
 'Tis thine alone the wand'ring thought to bring
 To fair perfection's bright, unfully'd spring:
 'Tis thine, with firm, tho' modest look, to gaze
 Upon th' empyreal heav'n, and sapphire blaze.

But hold, my Muse! nor raise this airy strain
 With verse to mean, to join th' angelic choir,
 Who glorify in ceaseless strains above,
 The First GREAT CAUSE of harmony and love:
 The awful praises of whose HALLOW'D NAME
 No heart can image, and no tongue proclaim,
 Enough for thee his glorious works to trace
 In earth, and skies, and man's imperial race;
 To view in ev'ry clime, and ev'ry hour,
 Th' OMNIPOTENT, and OMNIPRESENT Power,
 To see all NATURE's charms derive their force
 From this ETERNAL, UNIVERSAL Source,
 And in mysterious silence wrap'd, to own
 That BEAUTY's perfect grace is found in Him alone.
 Meek-eyed Religion, hail! — for well I know

Thy mild demeanor, and thy placid brow.
 'Tis thine alone the wedding thought to bring
 To fair perfection's bright, and holy ring:

'Tis thine, with firm, the nicest look, to gaze
 Upon th' empirical heav'n, and asph'ire place.

